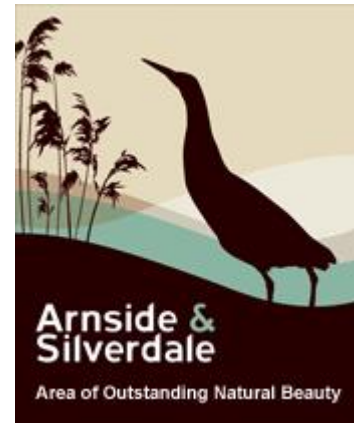


Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership

Executive Committee meeting

2pm, 1st November 2023
Storth Village Hall

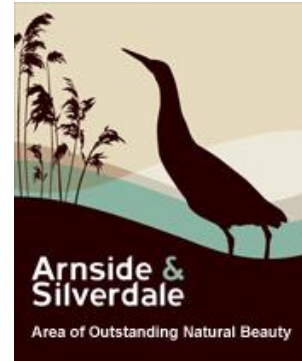


AGENDA

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions
2. Annual re-endorsement of User Groups, Business and Farming representatives and election of Chair and Vice Chairs
3. Minutes of meeting held on 7th June 2023
4. Matters arising
5. AONB Partnership team work programme - presentation and update (report circulated)
6. AONB Budget 2022/23 Final Outturn and 2023/24 Mid-Year Report (report circulated)
7. Planning work programme update (report circulated)
8. Brief updates from partners
9. AONB Management Plan review 2024 (report circulated) **Decision required**
10. National Landscape rebrand
11. National update – activities of National Association for AONBs, forthcoming legislative changes (amendment to Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill) and Protected Landscapes Partnership.
12. Bittern Award 2023
13. Any Other Business
14. Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

Refreshments provided
4.30pm finish

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership



AONB Executive Committee meeting minutes

2pm, 7th June 2023, Storth Village Hall

In Attendance

Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair), Beetham Parish Council

Cllr Helen Chaffey (Vice-Chair), Westmorland & Furness Council

Ann Kitchen, BCCIC – Business Rep

Brian Jones, Ramblers – User Group Rep

Julian Oston, Dallam Tower Estate – Landowner Rep

Mike Warren, Landscape Trust

Simon Waller, CLA

Jim Turner, Natural England

Elliott Lorimer, Lancashire County Council – Officer Rep

Damian Law, Westmorland & Furness Council – Officer Rep

Lucy Barron, AONB Manager, AONB Partnership Team

Sue Hunter, AONB Officer, AONB Partnership Team

Dougie Watson, Countryside Officer, AONB Partnership Team

Caroline Howard, Funding & Communications Officer (mins), AONB Partnership Team

Apologies

Fiona Allan, Landscape Trust

Sam Stalker, National Trust

Dan Taylor, National Trust

Jarrold Sneyd, RSPB Leighton Moss

Cllr Keith Reed, Silverdale Parish Council

Cllr Steve Porter, Arnside Parish Council

Laura Partington, Friends of the Lake District

Gemma Wren, Nature's Gems – Business Rep

Adam Briggs – NFU Rep (alternate) / Farming in Protected Landscapes Local Assessment Panel Chair

Richard Camp, Lancaster City Council – Officer Rep

Rachel Whaley, Westmorland & Furness Council – Officer Rep (represented by Damian Law)

Helen Rawlinson, Countryside Officer, AONB Partnership Team

Richard Park, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, AONB Partnership Team

Tonia Armer, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, AONB Partnership Team
Belinda Barclay, Local Nature Reserves Warden, AONB Partnership Team
Julia Seir, Wildflower Nursery Coordinator, AONB Partnership Team

Not in Attendance

Sarah Wilson, Natural England
Liz Cheslett-Davey, Environment Agency
Cllr Philippa Williamson, Lancashire County Council
David Harpley, Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Cllr Kevin Briggs, Warton Parish Council
Cllr Mike Macklin, Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Cllr Angela Metcalfe, Yealand Conyers Parish Council
Ailsa Gibson, User Group Rep – Bridleways Association
NFU Rep – Joan Jackson
Circulation – CLA, Libby Bateman

Vacant

Lancaster City Council Representative

Minutes

15. Welcome, apologies and introductions, including committee changes

- 1.1 Cllr Brian Meakin opened the meeting and gave updates on committee changes, giving thanks to all those who have stepped down and a welcome to the new committee members:
- 1.1.1 Jim Turner has replaced Glen Swainson as a representative for Natural England.
 - 1.1.2 Lancaster City Council are yet to appoint a new representative following the local elections in May. June Greenwell, the previous representative, did not stand as a councillor in these elections. We expect to be informed shortly who the new representative will be.
 - 1.1.3 Due to local government reorganisation the previous representative for Cumbria County Council, Pete McSweeney, has left the committee. Cllr Helen Chaffey has been confirmed as the new member representative for Westmorland and Furness Council and is happy to remain Vice Chair. Rachel Whaley and Damian Law will remain officer representatives.
 - 1.1.4 Cllr Keith Reed has replaced Jim Ferguson for Silverdale Parish Council, but has had to send apologies today.
 - 1.1.5 Cllr Angela Metcalfe has replaced Jane Panton for Yealand Conyers Parish Council.
 - 1.1.6 Gemma Wren is the new business representative, but has had to send apologies today.
 - 1.1.7 Fiona Allan has temporarily stepped down from her role within the Landscape Trust and is deputised by Mike Warren at this meeting.

16. Minutes of meeting held on 19th October 2022

- 2.1 Brian Jones raised a correction – Ailsa Gibson is a representative of the Bridleways Association not the Ramblers Association.

- 2.2 Ann Kitchen proposed the minutes (with the above correction) be accepted as a true record, Julian Oston seconded.

17. Matters arising

- 3.1 Lucy Barron gave the following updates on matters arising from the last meeting:
- 3.1.1 An advert was shared for a new business representative and Gemma Wren of Nature's Gems Wildlife Tours has joined the committee as a business representative.
 - 3.1.2 The Cumbria County Council contribution was secured with a modest increase in 2022/23.
 - 3.1.3 Jack Ellerby delivered a talk on dark skies as a *Talking the Landscape* Event in Arnside in April 2023.
 - 3.1.4 Caroline Howard organised a meeting with Beth Fox from RSPB Leighton Moss, and also hosted events co-ordination meeting with various organisations. This has resulted in the development of a more collaborative events programme.
 - 3.1.5 Lucy Barron contacted the Rural Watch scheme and had a meeting with the organiser.

18. AONB Budget 2022/23 and 2023/24 (report circulated)

- 4.1 Lucy Barron and Caroline Howard gave a brief overview of the budget report.
- 4.2 Ann Kitchen asked about the increase in the water rates. Rates have risen, but the billing dates in 22/23 also meant that there was higher expenditure than usual – this should not be the case going forward. This is also the budget that covers the water filters for the office, which can be an irregular cost.
- 4.3 The core contribution from Westmorland and Furness Council was discussed. The AONB Partnership requested a core contribution of £32,000, which initially appeared to have been confirmed and was therefore included in the budgets. There has been correspondence this morning that this amount may not be correct. This will be clarified and the final adjustment will be confirmed at the next meeting.
- 4.4 A grant fund to be administered by Westmorland and Furness Council has been launched which will be available for climate and nature projects. Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership could bid for projects. Cllr Helen Chaffey will be chairing the Locality Board for South Lakeland, which also has some funding available. Julian Oston asked if Westmorland and Furness Council might also be administering the local Rural Prosperity Fund – this has been launched in the Lancaster District, and further details will be found and circulated regarding the fund within Westmorland and Furness.
- 4.5 Elliott Lorimer is currently negotiating a potential increase in the core contribution from Lancashire County Council; this may not impact the 23/24 financial year, but will hopefully impact from 2024/5 onwards.
- 4.6 The 2023/34 budget was proposed to be accepted by Ann Kitchen, and seconded by Julian Oston.

19. Presentation: National Landscapes – national rebranding progress update

- 5.1 Lucy Barron gave a presentation introducing the new National Landscape branding, with an update on the current progress.

Within the National Landscapes Review (Glover et al., 2019) it was recognised that the AONB brand does not have brand recognition widely in the UK.

The NAAONB have been working with Defra on the rebranding of AONBs nationally. This has resulted in a proposal for the re-naming of AONBs.

5.2 The rebranding presentation was discussed by the committee, and feedback given to the AONB Partnership team to pass on to the NAAONB.

20. AONB Team work programme update (report circulated)

6.1 Lucy Barron gave a brief overview of the AONB work programme, highlighting in particular:

6.1.1 The AONB Nature Recovery Plan which the AONB Partnership have been working on; a consultation draft is anticipated in Summer 2023. Simon Waller asked how this would be circulated and presented and how specific it would be – Lucy Barron responded that this will include some level of specificity. Julian Oston asked how this would work with CS – Lucy Barron responded that CS would be a key delivery mechanism.

6.1.2 We have negotiated a new Countryside Stewardship Agreement for the two Local Nature Reserves which will run from 2023-27.

6.1.3 The volunteer programme continues to attract new volunteers and deliver significant outputs which deliver the AONB Management Plan.

6.1.4 The events programme and engagement projects have engaged new audiences.

6.1.5 The Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme, delivered with the Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company has been an effective tool for engaging local schools and delivering a range of low carbon and nature projects.

21. Planning work programme update (report circulated)

7.1 Sue Hunter gave an update on the planning work programme. There has been a substantial increase in planning applications and the number of responses.

7.2 During the Westmorland and Furness Council validation checklist process we made some comments highlighting the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Planning Document. We highlighted the priority habitats in the AONB, light pollution and the AS08 design policy in particular.

7.3 Damian Law raised that consideration of the extent of any review of the AONB DPD will begin within the next year as it will be five years in March since its adoption. Westmorland and Furness Council are currently considering future local plan needs for the authority and it cannot be confirmed how the current South Lakeland Local Plan review will be taken forward in this context. Planning for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB area within the Westmorland & Furness Council area comes under South Lakeland Local area committee which Cllr Helen Chaffey sits on.

8 Farming in Protected Landscapes programme update (report circulated)

8.1 Lucy Barron highlighted the circulated report and confirmed that the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme has been extended for another year to 2024/25 and that the allocation for 2023/24 has also been increased.

9 Brief updates from partners

- 9.1 Beetham Parish Council (Cllr Brian Meakin) – The main activity of the parish council recently has been responding to the planning application at Sandside; current understanding is that this is still awaiting a decision.
- 9.2 Lancashire County Council (Elliott Lorimer) – There is now a dedicated officer for working on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Lancashire. Current timeframe is expected to be over the next 18 months.
- 9.3 Westmorland & Furness Council (Damian Law) – There will be a team within Westmorland and Furness Council preparing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cumbria, working on behalf of Cumberland Council also.
- 9.4 Landscape Trust (Mike Warren) – The Landscape Trust reserves are doing well. The events programme is being delivered in partnership with the AONB team. The Landscape Trust are still in need of volunteers for the administrative activities.
- 9.5 Dallam Tower Estate (Julian Oston) – Funded via the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme fencing was constructed on Hazelslack marsh to allow cattle grazing to take place, and this year there have been redshank, oystercatchers and curlews nesting. A great success in just one year!
- 9.6 Natural England (Jim Turner) – Glen has been moved to another position in Natural England for a year. Jim is managing reserves across a wide area, including Gait Barrows NNR. The cow barn has been refurbished, the disabled access car park has been refurbished, the dormouse reintroduction has exceeded expectations. The site has had a couple of improved seasons for the Duke of Burgundy after reduced numbers in recent years.

10 Update from National Association for AONBs

- 10.1 Lucy Barron gave an update on the NAAONB. The association now have an expanded team with a Nature Recovery Officer and other staff working on recommendations coming out of the National Landscapes Review.

11 Any Other Business

- 11.1 Ann Kitchen discussed the newly formed AONB Botanical Surveying Project and proposed that a collaborative programme for biological record management be investigated.

Following the recent Nature Recovery Plan meeting a group of local botanists formed a new group with the aims to:

- 1) produce a set of typical species representing 11 habitat types (on average 5 species per habitat type) and monitor a fixed number of colonies/individual plants for each species. A max of 25 locations for any species spread over the AONB but probably less for most species. These would act as "canaries in the mine" - indicator species for overall habitat monitoring.
- 2) take a small number of sites, either small areas or linear walks along a footpath, that we have historical data for and see what was present in 2014, is present now and what is present in 5 years' time.

- 3) for those species that are at risk, encourage local landowners to host colonies grown from local seeds/spores and also to look out for them on their own land. The new AONB growing area could form a key part of this.

There is a lack of a consistent recording system, the county records are significantly backlogged, and biological record data are not widely available or shared effectively. Jarrod Sneyd at RSPB Leighton Moss is trialling Coreo, a biological record management programme. This programme is not free but is useable and might be fit for the purpose of collating biological records for the AONB.

Lucy Barron suggested that an action moving forward from this meeting should be to arrange a meeting to discuss options and resourcing. Jim Turner stated that Natural England would be interested in becoming involved and might have historical data to upload. Julian Oston stated that the Dallam Tower Estate might be interested, linked to their Countryside Stewardship Agreement.

ACTION: Meeting to further discuss biological recording software options; how it can be taken forward and resourced.

- 11.2 Sue Hunter showed the group a copy of the Geological Story of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, which is now available for sale from the AONB Office.

- 11.2.1 The AONB Partnership team are in discussions with RSPB Leighton Moss to stock the booklet. Mike Warren suggested the team contact Steve Benner from the Landscape Trust to see if it could be stocked in the Landscape Trust online store. Brian Meakin suggested that the Storth Community Shop might be able to stock it.

12 Dates for your diary and dates of future meetings

Next Meeting - 2pm 18th October 2023

Spring 2024 Meeting - 2pm 22nd May 2024

Table of Actions

Action	Allocated to	Deadline
Organise a meeting to further discuss biological recording software options; how it can be taken forward and resourced.	LB	Next Meeting

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Executive Committee 01.11.23**

AGENDA ITEM 5

AONB Partnership team work programme update

Report prepared by: AONB staff

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of the AONB Partnership team work programme

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report

AONB Partnership team work programme update

Since June 2023, key achievements of the AONB Partnership team include:

Outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage

- Began early work on the State of the AONB Report for the AONB Management Plan Review.
- Worked, taking a landscape-scale approach, as a key or supporting partner, in numerous partnerships/projects notably Cumbria, Lancashire and Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnerships, Warton Mires project, Back on Our Map (BOOM), Our Future Coast and Becks to Bay Catchment Partnership. Held 'handover' meeting with BOOM project team to ensure growing of key species continues.
- Participated in meetings and workshops to help progress Lancashire and Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Draft A&S AONB Nature Recovery Plan in final stages – consultation will start before the end of the year. Continued work with partners to develop proposal for a Super National Nature Reserve in the AONB.
- Ongoing direct conservation management of Trowbarrow and Warton Crag SSSIs:
 - Continued implementation of Year 1 of Countryside Stewardship agreement
 - Worked in partnership to further discussions around Crag-wide herd conservation grazing and cooperative management.
 - Volunteer activities at Warton Crag included bracken control, footpath maintenance and invasive Cotoneaster removal.
 - Volunteer activities at Trowbarrow included access management, creating wall to protect the Bee Orchids, bracken control, boundary wall improvements, invasive species work, scrub clearance.
 - Trowbarrow advisory group meeting held October 2023.
 - Warton Crag advisory group meeting held June 2023.
 - National Tick survey- Tick collection from Warton Crag.
 - Climbing Advisory Annual Meeting - promoting positive use and increased awareness of designated geological features
 - Ash dieback surveys carried out at Trowbarrow and Warton Crag LNRs

- Provision of independent landscape-related planning and policy advice to local authorities, including reviewing and making formal responses to planning applications according to an agreed Planning Protocol, and responding to other consultations, as detailed under agenda item 7.
- Delivery of AONB Volunteer Programme including practical conservation and enhancement works at key sites across the AONB. More details below.
- Habitat & Access Management Volunteers - completed the install at the Growing Station, habitat management and seed collection at Dobshall Wood & Grubbins Wood, joint NT/NE/AONB litter pick on the Carnforth Slag heaps, plug planting at Gaitbarrows Farm, Scar Close, Ashmeadow, joint AONB/NT plug planting day at Far Arnside, volunteer outing to Clawthorpe Fell/Hutton Roof Crag - total of 1205 vol hrs in period.
- Litter picks - June Silverdale, July Storth, August Warton, September Arnside, October Beetham
- Bee on the verge
 - continuing to support APC with verge improvements, including filming the project with W&F council
 - collection/sowing of seed and plug planting at Sandside Road and Black Dyke road
 - assisted LCC with plugs for Warton village and community scheme in Yealand.
 - Plug planting and seed sowing with Arnside School Eco club at Beechwood
 - Community plug planting day (Saturday) with local families attending (total of 17 participants)
- The Growing Station, the AONB wildflower nursery, established, successful growing season producing wildflower plugs for grassland restoration projects all grown from seed collected in the AONB. 4 'regular' volunteers helping with pricking out and potting on the plants. Grown approx. 8500 plugs. Successfully applied to FiPL application to recruit an AONB Community Growing manager to develop and build up this project. Recruitment in progress.
- Landowner advice and guidance work for nature recovery projects - Clare's land - orchard and pasture, Hale Moss - two landowners; fen, pond, vegetation management, Thrang End Farm, (some of these have led to FiPL applications)
- Botanical survey of 8 meadows carried out (re-surveying meadows in meadow makers project and 3 new sites)
- Continuation of AONB native tree nursery project, growing local provenance oak, elm, crab apple and rowan trees.
- Participation in and active support for activities of the National Association for AONBs, including attending the Northern AONBs meeting in Howardian Hills AONB and the National Landscapes for Life Conference in Bath in September 2023.
- Supporting butterfly transect monitoring, working with Butterfly Conservation.
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme is a Defra programme administered by Protected Landscape organisations in England. The programme provides grant funding to farmers and land managers for projects that provide outcomes in the following themes:
 - Climate
 - Nature
 - People
 - Place

Projects that have been funded so far for FiPL Year 3 (April 2023 to March 2024) is given below:

- **AS120 Brackenthwaite:** Fencing to enable grazing for conservation and various hedge and tree planting. Also, production of a management plan. In progress. **£13,041.87**
- **AS119 AONB Wildflower Growing Space:** Purchase of equipment and materials to establish a wildflower nursery, providing volunteering opportunities and producing wildflower plug plants from locally sourced seed. Up and running. **£3,646.00**

- **AS202 Gibraltar Farm Weed Wiper:** Purchase of an ATV-towed weed wiper to enable targeted weed control and significantly reduced herbicide usage. Purchased and in use. **£1,041.00**
- **AS203 AONB CS workshop:** Delivery of a workshop to farmers covering Countryside Stewardship and other grant schemes. Completed. **£725.50**
- **AS204 Myers Allotment:** Scrub clearance to maintain biodiversity on an important Butterfly Conservation site, plus purchase of moth traps for monitoring. In progress. **£2,868.69**
- **AS208 Fell End:** Planting of a new hedge to improve biodiversity, fenced and with gates to allow grazing. Planting due to start in autumn. **£4,220.86**
- **AS207 Coppice Co-op Outreach:** Delivery of woodland days for Underley school pupils with special educational needs. Starting soon. **£3,380.00**
- **AS200 Swingletrees:** Fencing and gates to allow conservation grazing to improve biodiversity. In progress. **£8,128.70**
- **AS205 Gingerbread Meadow:** New stile and improved gateway to allow access for conservation grazing to improve biodiversity. Completed. **£1,089.90**
- **AS210 Challan Hall Veteran Tree Survey:** Tree survey with recommendations made for further work to preserve ancient trees. Completed. **£345.00**
- **AS212 Community Growing Manager:** Labour resource to manage and develop the AONB Growing Space and coordinate volunteers. Recruitment in progress. **£8,580.80**
- **AS206 Far Arnside:** Meadow restoration to create species-rich grassland and improve biodiversity, beside Arnside Knott. Plants and seed ordered and planting dates completed or set. **£3,018.08**
- **AS211 Clare's Orchard.** Management plan underway. Planting fruit trees, scrub management, pruning and identifying fruit tree species will be carried out later this autumn. **£6,414.66**
- **AS215 Landscape Trust Brush-cutter:** Purchase of a brush-cutter for use by volunteers in conservation management of woodland. **£639.20**
- **AS214 Gibraltar Farm NT land:** Fencing to separate an area for conservation management, with grassland restoration, gates, and water troughs for rotational grazing. In progress. **£14,396.48**

Vibrant and sustainable communities

- Provision of bespoke advice and support to landowners and managers on land management practices which help conserve and enhance the landscape and natural and cultural heritage of the area.
- Continued long-term support for social forestry initiative Silverdale District Wood Bank.
- Rural skills: continued working with Lancashire and Westmorland Hedgelaying Association to prepare for training event in autumn 2023
- Delivered Visitor Welcome Volunteer programme - weekly walks and popup stands to engage with visitors and locals to encourage responsible behaviour and improve visitor experience within the AONB from April – August.
- Supporting Silverdale Parish Council with community-led Transport and Access working group aiming to address issues around parking, access, and connectivity of routes
- Provided advice and support to partners and Parish Councils.
- Working with Lancashire County Council to continue AONB Partnership management of the Warton Crag Quarry Local Nature Reserve and car park site, a key arrival point for the AONB.
- Delivered the AONB Grants Fund - run jointly by the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership and the Arnside/Silverdale Landscape Trust, working together to support projects which conserve and enhance the AONB or connect people with the landscape. Two projects have been funded: Yealand Orchard Project and North Lancs Bat Group. Another is currently under consideration.
- Ongoing and continued support for the AONB Landscape Trust and Bittern Countryside CIC, in particular support given to LT reserves management committee.

- Delivery of Bittern Sustainable Schools Programme with Bittern Countryside CIC: exhibited children's artworks at the Silverdale & Arnside Arts and Crafts Trail as part of the Marvellous Moths workshop series - simultaneously raising awareness of light pollution and the impact of climate change on moths. The programme has now supported sustainability activities in all 6 primary schools, with the solar panels installed at Arnside and the LED lighting for Yealand (the last project on the current programme) now confirmed.
- Delivered the practical AONB Volunteer Programme:
 - Volunteer inductions - 2 inductions 4 new volunteers, 4 additional enquiries
 - 10 volunteers trained in Emergency First Aid
 - 1 new chainsaw qualified volunteer
 - Friends of Warton Crag - Focusing primarily around the main quarry car park (Lancashire County Council site) Monthly activities including habitat works, plant surveys, maintenance and community engagement.
 - Peregrine Watch Volunteer group at Warton Crag (Feb-July) Two chicks fledged successfully.
 - Scything refresher course held, following which a regular team of scythers has met weekly on a Wednesday afternoon to practice and take on some of the grassland management sites the AONB volunteers look after
- Communications Volunteers have helped to research and deliver walks and have written up Walking the Landscape routes for Keer to Kent. A photography workshop was delivered at RSPB Leighton Moss (September 2023) for our photography volunteers.

A strong connection between people and the landscape

- Continued implementation of the AONB Communications Strategy – provided and distributed a range of online, social media and printed communication and information materials.
- Produced 3 e-newsletters, providing updates on the AONB team's activities, information about local 'species in season' and promoting events.
- Increased following on social media. We now have 4,739 followers on X, 4,477 followers on Facebook, 1,022 followers on Instagram and 1,793 subscribers to our e-newsletter.
- Ongoing operation of the AONB Information Centre at Arnside Station.
- Addressing issues around responsible behaviour in the countryside used social media to promote the Countryside Code.
- Continued essential maintenance and warden duties at Warton Crag, Warton Crag Quarry and Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserves.
- Delivery of Dementia-friendly Walks for All Programme – a programme of weekly supported walks in different locations across the AONB. The Walks for All programme has been funded by FiPL this year, and a Woodland Wellness session was delivered at Silver Sapling. The programme has been able to include new walks (including Eaves Wood and a return to Wolf & Us).
- Events programme – events delivered so far this year:
 - Walking the Landscape: Wells of Silverdale (April 2023)
 - Walking the Landscape: Orchids of Arnside (May 2023)
 - Walking the Landscape (Limestone Heritage Trail (June 2023)
 - Woodland Fun Day at Dobshall Wood Meadow (June 2023)
 - National Meadows Day: BioBlitz at Coldwell Meadow (July 2023)
 - Woodland Fun Day at Trowbarrow LNR (August 2023)
 - Walking the Landscape: The Fairy Steps (August 2023)
 - Moth Morning at Warton Crag (August 2023)
 - Walking the Landscape Historic Warton (September 2023)
 - Bat walk at Trowbarrow (September 2023)
- Events programme - upcoming events:
 - Family Fungi Day (October 2023)
 - Talking the Landscape: The Geological story of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB (joint LT, November 2023)
- Supported the Landscape Trust in the delivery of:
 - Explore the Landscape: Mawsons in Summer (July 2023)

- Explore the Landscape Mawsons in Autumn (October 2023)
- Continued the Waymarking the AONB programme, 6 new posts installed, 3 renovated by volunteers reinstated, 3 additional sponsorships - scheme to date raised £8.5k+
- Met with Natural England to inform next steps of implementation of King Chales III Coast Path, following approval by the Secretary of State for the Silverdale – Cleveleys section.
- We secured funding for the continuation of the Into the Woods Programme, with another full year programme, this time supporting a member of staff at Chadwick in training as a forest school leader and the development of some facilities onsite to support a connection between the experiences in the AONB and time back in school.
- Woodland Oasis outdoor classroom site at Trowbarrow LNR now available for free bookings through the AONB Team. Bookings for Cancer Care, local schools, skills for teenagers and childcare groups have utilised the site. Two members of staff qualified as L3 Forest School Leaders to assist with groups at the Woodland Oasis site and other sites.
- Working with landowners and partners to develop options for projects to improve access to the countryside to plan for Removing Barriers funding spend in 2024/5.
- Produced a Geological Story booklet to increase engagement with the geology of the AONB – now for sale at AONB Info Centre and RSPB Leighton Moss.

**Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Executive Committee 01.11.2023**

AGENDA ITEM 6

AONB Budget 2022-23 and 2023-24

Report prepared by Caroline Howard, AONB Funding and Communications Officer

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with details of the final outturn of 2022-23 AONB budget and current AONB budget for 2023-24

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report

Background

The 2023/24 budget has been revised to take into account of a number of changes and to enable effective delivery of the AONB Business Plan.

Please note the AONB Budget as reported includes the Local Nature Reserves management income and expenditure, including staffing.

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Budget 2023-24 Mid Year Report

Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Final Outturn	2023-24 Budget Jun 23	2023-24 Budget Oct 23
Staff	Salaries, NI, Pensions	208,040.60	225,800	234,500
	AONB Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments ¹	9,830.29	-	-
	LNR Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	3,596.78	-	-
	Travel & Subsistence	821.99	1,100	1,300
	Training	2,873.52	1,500	1,500
	Staff Sub-total	225,163.18	228,400	237,300
Office	Repair & Maintenance etc.	5,613.87	3,500	6,600
	Electricity	399.48	800	800
	Misc. Energy Charges	1,329.41	700	700
	Rent	3,000	3,100	3,100
	Rates	2,370.25	2,400	2,400
	Water Services	368.23	100	100
	Premises Related Insurance	634.75	600	600
	Office Equipment	2,512.35	1,000	1,100
	Telephones	877.32	900	900
	Office Sub-total	17,105.66	13,100	16,300
Communications & Events	Printing & Stationery	366.57 ²	600	600
	Exhibitions & Events	4,721.56 ³	1,600	2,400
	Communications & Publicity	4,759.65	3,100	3,100
	Comms. Sub-total	9,847.78	5,300	6,100
Partnership	Employee Related Insurances	1,092.7	1,100	1,400
	Repair & Maintenance of Vehicles	614.66	300	400
	Petrol & Derv	370.11	300	300
	Vehicle Licences	292.5	200	200
	Transport Related Insurance	109.32	100	600
	Equipment and Tools - General	890.71	1,000	1,000
	Clothing & Uniforms	219.17	300	300
	Support - Internal Recharges (S)	16,600	16,600	16,600
	AONB Executive Support	5,258.22	3,900	3,900
	Partnership Sub-total	25,447.39	23,800	24,700
Programme	Management Plan Projects ⁴	64,294.23	40,000	59,800
	LNR Management Programme	4,743.68	11,300	18,100
	LNR Trowbarrow Interpretation	1,556	2,600	2,600
	Programmes Sub-total	70,593.91	53,900	80,500
Reserve	Contribution to Reserve Sub-Total	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total		350,157.92	326,500	366,900

¹ Pension adjustments added in P13 profiled separately and offset against additional income from LCC.

² Adjusted due to incorrect coding of postage charges from n2010.

³ Included AONB 50th Anniversary Dinner – offset by additional income.

⁴ Includes consultants.

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Final Outturn	2023-24 Budget (June 23)	2023-24 Budget (Oct 23)
Government Grants	DEFRA	166,691.57	166,900	166,900
	LNR Countryside Stewardship	2,801.00	8,800 ⁵	16,000
	Government Grants Sub-total	169,492.57	175,700	182,900
Contributions from Local Authorities	Cumbria County Council	10,126	-	-
	South Lakeland District Council	13,225	-	-
	Westmorland & Furness Council	-	32,000	32,000
	Lancashire County Council	9,000	9,000	14,200
	LNR Lancashire County Council	5,700	5,900	5,900
	Lancaster City Council	37,600	41,700	41,700
	LNR Lancaster City Council	16,827.78	18,800	18,800
	AONB Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	8,078.63 ⁶	-	-
	LNR Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	3,596.78	-	-
	Parish Council Donations	2,200	-	-
	LAs Sub Total	106,354.19	107,400	112,600
Other Income	ARETI Grants	22,245	9,000	35,400
	Meadow Makers (NHLE/Plantlife)	9,560	-	-
	LNR Other Income	1,556	2,600	2,600
	Parish Councils & Vol. Days	-	6,500	6,500
	Volunteer Days	2,440	-	-
	AONB Other Income (Misc.)	4,059.46 ⁷	-	-
	Fingerpost Donations	1,450	-	-
	Other Bodies Sub-Total	41,310.46	18,100	44,500
Feed In Tariff	FIT Credits	467.51	500	500
Reserve	Transfer out of Reserve	0	0	0
Recharges	FiPL Staff Time Re-charge	9,099.32	4,400	6,000
Host Authority In Kind	LCiC in kind support	16,600	16,600	16,600
	LCiC Property Services	4,833.87	1,800	1,800
	HA In Kind Support Subtotal	21,433.87	18,400	18,400
Reserves	LCiC Contribution to Reserves	2,000	2,000	2,000
	Total	350,157.92	326,500	366,900

AONB reserve	23/24
Balance as at 01/04/23	£68,624.27
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	£2,000
Less transfer out of reserve	0
Projected balance in reserve at 01/04/24	£70,624.27

⁵ Does not include CS education supplement, which will be offset against LNR Warden overtime, educational activities and habitat management works.

⁶ Adjusted in final outturn.

⁷ Includes AONB Anniversary Dinner income.

Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme

Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Final Outturn	2023-24 Budget (June 23)	2023-24 Budget (Oct 23)
Staff	Salaries, NI, Pensions	31,258.37	33,200	57,500
	Travel & Subsistence	186.75	500	300
	AONB Staff Recharges	6,581.96	4,400	4,400
	FiPL Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments ⁸	808.68	0	-
	Additional Admin/A&G Staffing ⁹	-	23,748	-
	Staffing Costs Sub-total	38,649.01	61,848	62,200
Advice & Guidance and Admin	Office	0	500	100
	Events	1,609.28	1,900	1,900
	Print & Postage	0	200	200
	Clothing & Uniforms	132	200	100
	Equipment	0	200	0
	Mobile Phones	-	-	300
	Advice, Guidance & Admin Sub Total	1,741.28	3,000	2,600
Grants	Grants	107,727.89	176,801	176,800
Total		148,304.93	241,649	241,600

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Final Outturn	2023-24 Budget (June 23)	2023-24 Budget (Oct 23)
Government Grants	DEFRA	147,754.32	241,649	241,600
Contributions from Local Authorities	FiPL Lancaster CC Pension Adjustments	550.61	-	-
Total		148,304.93	241,649	241,600

⁸ Pension adjustments added in P13 were considerably larger than profiled; the unanticipated overspend has been separated and a corresponding income line added as income from LCC. The AONB team are in discussions with LCC and Defra as to how this unexpected expenditure will be resolved.

⁹ 2023-24 Allocations for Advice and Guidance and Admin have substantially increased (confirmed by Defra in late April 2023). Based on this increase the AONB Partnership is seeking additional admin support for the programme.

Removing Barriers Grant (2022-23 Only – Capital Expenditure) Expenditure

Category	Description	2022-23 Outturn
Staff	Staff Costs (Recharged from AONB Core)	2,517.36
	Staffing Costs Sub-total	2,517.36
Project Costs	Gait Barrows Access Works (Tramper Route & Parking)	2,388.45
	Golf Course Access Works (Tramper Route)	1,120
	Challan Hall Back Wood Access Works (Tramper Route)	1,675
	Trowbarrow Access Works (Tramper Route)	1,120
	Sandside Cutting Access Works	7,907.36
	Redhills Pasture Accessible Gates	3,250.94
	Walks for All / Sensory Support Equipment	863.88
	Project Costs Sub Total	18,325.63
Total		20,842.99

Income

Category	Description	2022-23 Outturn
Government Grants	DEFRA	20,842.99 ¹⁰
Total		20,842.99

¹⁰ Total available grant was £25,000.

Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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AGENDA ITEM 7

Planning work update

Report prepared by: Sue Hunter, AONB Officer

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Partnership team on behalf of the AONB Executive Committee

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report on planning and development management work

Introduction

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and development management and planning are a key element in achieving this.

Background

The AONB Executive Committee is a consultee on planning matters, both planning policy and planning applications; it is not a decision maker. Planning decisions are made by the relevant local planning authority.

Planning policies for AONBs are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Plans, in particular the A&S AONB Development Plan Document, jointly adopted by Westmorland & Furness and Lancaster City Councils. AONB designation and the AONB Management Plan are material considerations in the planning process.

Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Partnership Planning Protocol

The AONB Planning Protocol sets out how the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Partnership team and local authority partners will work together regarding planning matters affecting the AONB.

Planning applications

All planning applications within the AONB are reviewed and also any applications outside, but potentially impacting on, the AONB. Records are kept of all applications reviewed by the AONB Team and the responses made.

A summary is given below of the total number of applications reviewed in 2023/24 to date; the number of applications per individual parish is given. The number of formal responses submitted to the planning authorities is also given.

Planning applications reviewed from 01/04/2023 to 30/09/2023

Arnside	24
Silverdale	19
Beetham	13
Yealand Conyers	6
Yealand Redmayne	5
Warton	12
Total within AONB	79
Outside AONB	4
Total no. applications	83
Responses submitted	36

Of the responses submitted since the last Executive Committee meeting, 2 included formal objections to the proposed development. These applications are listed below, with the final planning decisions noted (where available):

- **23/00310/FUL** – 18 St Johns Avenue, Silverdale – **application withdrawn**
- **23/00959/VCN** – Land north of 13 Main Street, Warton – **awaiting decision**

Formal objections made to applications reported at the last Executive Committee meeting but where a planning decision had not been made at the time include:

- **SL/2022/0893** – Hall More Lodge Caravan Site, Hale (retrospective) - **awaiting decision**
- **22/01604/FUL** – Yealand Hall Farm, Silverdale Road, Yealand Redmayne – **refused**
- **SL/2022/1160** – Beach Arbour, Redhills Road, Arnside – **permitted**
- **SL/2022/1177** – Land at Park Road and Quarry Lane, Sandside – **awaiting decision**
- **21/00899/HYB** – Land between Brewers Barn and the A601 (M), North Road, Carnforth – **awaiting decision**
- **22/00106/DIS** – Formed Walled Garden, Ridgeway Park, Silverdale – **split decision**

Other planning related work

- Lancaster City Council and Westmorland and Furness Council produced a Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document – Monitoring Report (Post Adoption to March 2022).

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AGENDA ITEM 9

Report title: AONB Management Plan Review Draft Project Plan

Report prepared by: Lucy Barron, AONB Manager and Sue Hunter, AONB Officer

Decision required

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the proposed approach, process and timetable for the review of the AONB Management Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

that the Committee

- (1)** formally agrees to conduct the Review on behalf of the three relevant local authority partners;
- (2)** approves the AONB Management Plan Review Draft Project Plan with or without amendments; and
- (3)** establishes a Review Working Group to support the AONB Partnership Team with the review process.

Introduction

The current AONB Statutory Management Plan requires review, in accordance with section 89(9-10) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; it is a requirement of the Act that the relevant local authorities jointly carry out a periodic review.

Background

It is proposed that the AONB Executive Committee formally conducts the required Review on behalf of the three relevant local authority partners, as was the case for previous AONB Management Plans. It is proposed that the AONB Partnership team carry out the day-to-day work of the review process supported by a Review Working Group, to include an officer representative from each local authority partner.

The Draft Project Plan shown in Appendix 1 details the context and proposed approach, process and timetable for the review.

Appendix 1

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan Review 2024/25

Draft Project Plan (October 2023)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024 was published in April 2019 by the AONB Partnership on behalf of the four responsible local authorities at that time: Cumbria County Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council.
- 1.2 Under Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, the relevant local authorities must review the Management Plan within five years of the date of publication. However, in July 2022, Defra wrote to all AONB Partnerships recommending that the review could be delayed by 1 year to allow publication of new Management Plan guidance and a new Protected Landscapes outcomes framework, and to allow measures introduced in response to the National Landscapes Review to take effect.
- 1.3 The CRoW Act requires that where a local authority reviews a management plan, they shall:
 - (a) determine on that review whether it would be expedient to amend the plan and what (if any) amendments would be appropriate,
 - (b) make any amendments that they consider appropriate, and
 - (c) publish a report on the review specifying any amendments made.
- 1.4 This Project Plan outlines how the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership intends to approach the process of reviewing the current Management Plan. It explains the various stages of work involved, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that will be undertaken as the Review develops, and the process of consultation.
- 1.5 The AONB Executive Committee will undertake the Review on behalf of the three Partner Local Authorities and will therefore have overall executive oversight of the Review and sign off the revised/amended Management Plan.
- 1.6 AONB Management Plans are statutory plans whose purpose is to provide a framework for ensuring delivery of the statutory purpose of AONBs, that of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of their designated landscapes¹¹. The Management Plan guides the work of

¹¹ As set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:

- The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- In pursuing the primary purpose of the designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.
- Recreation is not an objective of the designation, but the demand for recreation should be met insofar as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

the AONB Partnership. It sets the framework for action by Local Authorities, Public bodies, Businesses, Communities and Partner Organisations and informs the AONB Team work programme.

- 1.7 AONB Management Plans are not static. They must respond appropriately to new issues and challenges, and to changing political and regulatory conditions (for example, in agricultural funding or new primary legislation). Following numerous fundamental changes on the last 5 years, it is considered essential to carry out a full review of the Management Plan.

2. The Review Approach

- 2.1 Natural England is in the process of producing new Management Plan guidance, however, while a draft has been made available for comment by AONB Partnerships, the final document has not yet been published. Defra is also yet to publish the new Outcomes Monitoring Framework. Therefore, at the time of writing there are some significant unknowns in terms of the detail of the approach that will be required for the review. Nevertheless, it seems prudent to begin the review process, and adapt the approach if necessary once the above information becomes available.

3. The Review Process

- 3.1 This Review is the fourth Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan Review. The process set out in this document, builds on the Partnership's previous experience and takes into account previous Management Plan guidance. The plan will be updated following publication of the new Management Plan guidance and outcomes monitoring framework.
- 3.2 It is considered that there is much in the current plan that can be taken forward confidently into the next five years. A revised Plan is proposed that takes into account the important context changes since the publication of the last Management Plan, not least the National Landscapes Review.
- 3.3 The AONB Executive Committee will exercise overall control over the review process and have responsibility for approving the Plan and submitting it to the relevant Local Authorities, Natural England and Government. A Review working group is to be established which will have delegated responsibility from the Executive Committee to oversee and direct the review process. It is anticipated that the Review Group will comprise the Chair of the Executive Committee, one representative of each of the principal local authorities and Natural England, the AONB Manager and the AONB Officer and up to 3 other representatives. The Review Group will be responsible for agreeing new and revised content and will take general editorial control of all sections of the revised Management Plan, agree timetables, approve external contributions and oversee public consultation and participation. The Review Group will report regularly to the Executive Committee. The

AONB Team will carry out the day-to-day work of undertaking the Review in consultation with the Review Group and the Executive Committee.

3.4 The review process will comprise three broad phases from inception to publication as described below.

4. Outline Review Methodology and Timetable

4.1 The Review process can be split into three principal phases:

1. Scoping and preparing for the Review
2. Undertaking the Review
3. Publishing and adopting the Management Plan 2025-30

The table below attempts to summarise the key review stages and offers an outline timetable for the review of the Plan. Several of the review stages will be open to wider comment from all interested parties, partly through circulation of review documents, but also using on-line consultation, public consultation events and local information.

5. Proposed Review Timetable

Review Stage	Date	Output
Phase 1 - Scoping and preparing for the Review		
Announce the Review - formal notification to Local Authorities	Nov-Dec 2023	Approval for Executive Committee to carry out review
AONB Executive Committee consider project plan	Nov-Dec 2023	Approval of draft project plan Review working group established
Statutory notice issued to NE	Dec 2023	Statutory notice issued
Establish evidence base	Oct 2023 – autumn 2024	Data and maps collated and State of the AONB report produced
Review policy context – review of national, regional and local policy statements, strategies, plans and programmes	By Jan 2024	Information to inform screening and SEA
Screen the current Management Plan Initial Review	Nov 2023 – Mar 2024	Information and comments obtained about delivery of current MP and new issues, options, suggestions and priorities through workshops and questionnaire
Expert input into Special Qualities report	Nov 2023 – Mar 2024	Final report produced
Statement of Community Involvement	End Dec 2023	Statement produced
Consultation on SEA Scoping Report – 5 weeks	Feb/Mar 2024	Scoping report produced and comments gathered

AONB Executive Committee confirm scope of the Review	May/Jun 24	Approval of scope of the Review
Phase 2 – Undertaking the Review		
Develop the Draft revised Management Plan	Mar - Sep 2024	Writing and testing content of draft revised Plan based on evidence and information gathered in Phase 1
Undertake SEA/SA/HRA	By Jul 2024	Assessments undertaken
Produce Consultation Draft of revised Management Plan	By Sep 2024	Draft Plan produced
Produce draft Environmental and HRA Reports	By Sep 2024	Reports produced
Undertake Equality Impact Assessment	By Sep 2024	Assessment undertaken
Public consultation on the draft Revised Management Plan, Environmental and HRA reports – 6 weeks	Sep – Nov 2024	Public consultation process
Phase 3 - Publish and Adopt Management Plan 2025-30		
Prepare Final Draft of revised Management Plan taking account of consultation comments	Jan 2025	Final Draft Plan produced
Final plan approved by Executive Committee	Feb 2025	Approval by Executive Committee
Final Draft made available for final representations	Feb 2025	Final representations process
Prepare pre-adoption and publication versions of the revised Management Plan	Mar 2025	Confirmation of final draft by NE required
Local authorities adopt plan	Mar/Apr 2025	Approval needed from all local authority cabinets
Endorsement by other partners	Apr 2025	Endorsements received
Review Report published	Apr 2025	Report published
Publish Management Plan and submit to Secretary of State	Apr 2025	Final Plan published